**WEEK 1 | 1 SAMUEL 1-5 | GOD’S CALLING**

HOMEWORK: Read chapters 1-5 to get the context of the story then answer the questions.

In chapter 1 of I Samuel, Samuel is born to Elkanah and Hannah. List the challenges that Hannah faced before and after the birth of Samuel?

Before After

Hannah and Elkanah went to the temple to offer sacrifices each year. What did Hannah specifically pray for year after year?

* What does she promise to do if she receives what she asks for?

Does Hannah follow through with her promise when she conceives a son?

* What do you think her emotions were in doing this?
* Do you think she had doubts at any point in this process?
* Do you think this might be one of those times that it would have been easy for her to justify her actions and make a different choice? “God wouldn’t really expect me to give my child to him. I could raise him in a Godly family and that will be the same as taking him to live at the temple.”
* Do you think we each have a tendency to justify our actions to God? Is this something that you need to be honest with yourself and God on?

What do you think Hannah’s motive for having a son was?

* + Was it to have a child so that her disgrace would go away or to give that child to God?
* Was this a bargaining chip?
* Does that make it any less of a sacrifice on Hannah’s part?

In reading chapter 2, Hannah’s prayer, what do you think the intent of her prayer was:

* Was it to let her enemies, specifically Peninnah, know that God had heard her prayer?
* Was it to praise God?
* Was it to show God’s faithfulness?
* Was it all of the above or do you have a different thought on this?

Compare Hannah’s prayer with Mary’s prayer in Luke 1:46-50.

What was Eli’s response when learning of his son’s lifestyle? (Chapter 2, vs. 22-25)

* What do you think it should have been?
* How did God handle this misuse of his power as the priest? (Chapter 2, vs. 27-36)
* Can you think of why God would have reacted so harshly?

In the meantime, Samuel is being groomed to be a priest under Eli. What do you think Eli was teaching Samuel at the time of his calling? Read Chapter 3, vs. 7.

In Chapter 3 God calls the boy Eli four times. Vs. 4-10

* What is different about the 4th call in verse 10?
* God used Samuel in a very significant way in verses 11-18. What was that?
* Do you think Samuel was ready for this task? Verse 7 says that Samuel didn’t even know the Lord yet.
* From this point in time on, God groomed Samuel. What was Samuel’s calling according to vs. 20?

Describe the significance of the Ark of the Covenant according to chapter 4. (Also reference Exodus 25:10-22 and Joshua 3)

In Chapter 5 and 6 we see that even the Philistines knew that there was something special about the ark.

* Describe In your own words the events that took place in chapters 5 and 6 when the ark was in the possession of the Philistines.
* How does this idea compare to James 2:19?

**Come prepared to discuss the following in your group:**

* What is God’s call on you?
* How do you know what that call is?
* Is it a sin not to respond to his call?